THE MAN WITHOUT A MEMORY.

He Hears Again the Roar of Battle Thirty Years Ago, but Can't Recall the Name of His Daughter He Left Three Months Ago.

THIS is the story of a man without a memory—a pitiful story of a man whose mind is playing him strange tricks.

It lets him see with pictured clearness the roofs of Bremen lying against the sunset as he saw them nearly half a century ago, but it hides from him the vision of the shop where he worked and the room where he rested only three months since. He hears again the boom of the artillery as he heard it in his youth in the Franco-Prussian war, but he cannot force the rebellious vassal of his mind to recall the sounds that have waked him and soothed him these last few years—whether they are the deep notes of steamers passing near the water front, or the rattling of elevated trains in the crowded city, or the jingle of suburban horse cars.

It permits him—oh, pitiful irony!—to quote you the market prices of provisions current three months ago with automatic precision, and does not let him call his daughter by her name.

He is—or may be—Ernest Kauffman. He sits beside his narrow bed in one of Bellevue's long wards and fights grimly to regain mastery over that vagrant trickster in his mind. Up and down before him convalescents pace; he looks at them now with dull eyes that do not see them, and now with good-humored interest. For when he is not engaged in that silent, pathetic battle for the conquest of his memory, he is a genial, human, likable sort of a man.

The young girl whose name he cannot recall has a kindly father.

He was sitting by his bed, somewhat dingy as to garments and somewhat grizzled as to face, the other day when I went to see what glimpses of hit past my goad might stir in him. He rose to greet me courteously, for he has a pleasing German trick of deference, this pathetic castaway who claims no higher station than that of a grocer's delivery man.

"They say that you think you have a daughter," I hazarded after a few minutes' preliminaries.

"Oh, and a boy, too," he answered, with a father's quick pride in his son.

"How do you know?"

The strong, impassive face of the man without a memory twitched painfully.

"I—I think that I remember that," he said humbly.

"But," I argued, "if you had a son and a daughter, Mr. Kauffman, would they not have caused search to be made for you before now? You have been here since the first of March. You don't know how you came here or how long you had been wandering before you arrived, or from what place you came. But is it reasonable to suppose that your children could endure their father's unexplained absence for so long without sending out alarms?"

"You do not understand," cried the man without a memory, in a voice that shook with eager desire to defend his children from the charge of neglect. "You do not understand. They do not live with me. I—I work in a grocery store. It is hard work, with long hours; some one must sleep over the shop. I board there—where I work—since my wife died, and they, my boy and my girl—they live—somewhere else."

He ended weakly. Into his deep-set gray eyes the troubled look came back. He was trying to recall the "somewhere else" where they abide whom he would defend from a stranger's insinuation of filial ungratitude.

"Do you remember their names?"

He shook his head wearily. The turned-down collar on the dingy shirt that Bellevue lends her guests showed the working of the muscles of his throat.

"I can't remember," he half whispered.

"Do you remember how old they are, or how they look?"

"My boy is twenty-one already," he replied, with a gleam of paternal pride and amusement. "And my daughter—she is eighteen. My son"—he smiled—"he will be a voter now. They both look like me, the children."

That means, by the way, that they are a well set pair, with heads desirable from the phrenological point of view, and clear, honest, blue-gray eyes. Perhaps it means also that they have inherited a certain impassivity of feature, or that may have come as a recent development to the man without a memory.

"Is she—your daughter—married?" I asked.

"Married? My little girl?" The invalid has not lost his sense of humor, and he laughed at the idea so heartily that the men striding up and down the ward, or resting by their beds, turned to look at him. "No. She is too young. She is a child yet."

Thus did the patient at Bellevue relegate to her proper place the presumably pretty little miss of eighteen.

"But if your daughter is not married," I persisted, "then her name must be Kauffman—that is, if you are sure that your name is Kauffman. Now, wouldn't she be likely to read about you and come to see you?"

"She may not read it," he said, pathetically obstinate on the ground of his children's affections. "She may not read it. And—and some of the doctors say that—maybe, my name is not Kauffman—that perhaps I have forgotten my name, too, and only imagine that Kauffman is my name. But the rest—they believe that Kauffman is my name and that I have remembered it rightly. For the initials embroidered on the handkerchief I had when I came to the hospital were 'E. K.'"

An embroidered handkerchief seemed something that this plain German would not number among his possessions.

"Was it a present?" I asked him.

"Yes, it was from my daughter. I saw the children last on Christmas Day. It was a gift from my daughter."

But questionings and suggestions were powerless to recall where it was that the little girl who flits nameless through his thoughts had given him her present. Whether they came, "the children," to visit him in the room above the grocery store where he worked, whether for one day the long-hour and the hard-work rules were relaxed and he journeyed somewhere to see them; whether they went to church and faced holy stars and wreaths ,or whether they frolicked in secular fashion about a fir, laden as the Christmas trees of the Fatherland are wont to be—this he does not remember. There in the bleak ward he struggled with the recalcitrant servant of his brain.

Sometimes, he said, he almost caught the elusive phantom. But it was gone before he reached it, and there remained only the fleeting impression of evergreen and Christmas cheer and the tangible square of linen assuring him that it was not all a dream.

Now that he has regained his strength and the power of remembering events from day to day, Kauffman is allowed various privileges. He walks through the city, either attended or unattended, gazing hungrily at the houses he passes, eager for the moment when one shall burst upon his senses as the one he has forgotten.

"If I could just happen to see it," he says, "I know that I should know it. I can remember how the street looked where I lived when I was a boy. That was in Bremen. I can remember the houses and the boys I played with. I lived there until the Franco-Prussian war. I served on the hospital staff in that."

"Were you ever wounded?" I asked, thinking of the battle-scarred soldiers of our own war whom a chance bit of shell set to wandering among alien folk with all their past a blank. But that surmise was wrong. Mr. Kauffman smiled at the feminine lack of military knowledge.

"I did not fight," he corrected me gently.

"It was on the hospital staff that I was. I saw a battle, though," and he shuddered. "It's horrible; the cannon roar, roar, roar, and the rifles crack, crack, crack. The smell of the smoke and the thickness of the air—all that I remember. Did the war leave no effect on me at all? Yes. I have been rather deaf in my left ear ever since from the awful sound of cannonading. That smoke of battle I can see and that deafening thunder I can hear whenever I stop to listen. But—I—can't remember my daughter's name."

The head of Ernest Kauffman dropped forlornly upon his breast. His eyes grew desperate. There came into them the gleam of the never ending struggle—the reaching out after the fact that flitted with will o' the wisp impishness just beyond his grasp. Then he raised his head and sighed. The truth he had sought had eluded him again, and again he rested after the chase.

"Some of the people," he said humbly, "think that I've forgotten everything and have imagined what I think I remember. But I do not believe it. That boy, for instance, who thinks that he used to see me driving a coal cart, he must be mistaken. If I dealt in coals—why do I remember all the prices of grocery provisions? I could take a place in a grocery now, I know the price-list so well. And my hands—do my hands look as if I had handled coals?"

He spread out a pair of strong, hard, browned hands which certainly had not the battered, grimy look of having dealt in coal. And when I assured him that to my mind also his hands bore negative evidence against the coal theory, he sighed with a slightly relieved air.

"I get to doubting everything," he said. "They put me into hypnotic trances and I don't know what I say or do. I come out of them and I'm drowsy. They suggest first this thing and then that until one seems as likely as another to be true. And I would not trust any of it, if—if—it is in here," he touched his chest, "and not in there," and his fingers indicated his head, "that I know some things.

"My wife—who died—and my mother, she lives still in Bremen, but my father died when I was a child and she married again. I cannot remember now her name, else I would write to her and she would tell me who I am. But her name is gone. It is name's that go most. A bell fell upon my head about two years ago and cut open the skull, and Professor Dana says it has injured the naming part of the brain."

"Do you remember your wife's name?"

The signs of the mental struggle again upon his face—the hunting look in his eyes—the quick light of half success; then a half articulate murmur, it was:

"Mein liebe!"

Then his voice died away.

He shook his head fiercely as if to clear his mind of fancy spun cobwebs.

"Ah, no, miss! I have tried so hard, so often; but it goes no further than that; a love word we have in Germany."

ANNE O'HAGAN.

"Do You Remember Their Names?" He Shook His Head Wearily. "I Can't Remember," He Half Whispered.

Dr. George F. Shrady Writes of Loss of Memory From a Medical Standpoint.

"PEOPLE lose their memories," as well as those who have received injuries on the head. A pathological change will affect the power of expression and the memory. Medical history records numerous cases of people who, from receiving a blow on the head, have had the memory centre so paralyzed that they did not know that they had been injured. The loss of memory in such cases is a retrospective effect of the blow on the head.

"Then there is a form of insanity which is associated with loss of memory, and a loss of memory in associated events connected with long absence from home. For instance, a person has a hallucination, and his power of attention is paralyzed concerning surrounding objects, and he is not conscious of their transpiration.

"There is a conscious and a subconscious mind. Thus in dreams we may see some face clearly in our mind's eye that we do not remember. It may be the face of a person whom we passed unconcernedly on the street some time before, and whom we looked at without paying attention to the features. The impression was not vividly recorded in the mind because of this absence of attention at the time we saw the face, yet it is clearly brought before us in the dream, showing that it was unconsciously recorded. The same is true with pictures of places and animals.

"Such memories as these may be said to be lost, yet for some mysterious cause, while they could not be recalled at will, they are recalled in a dream. You often hear people say, 'Where have I seen that face before?' or they will ask, 'Where have I heard that name?' in an effort to recall some past event.

"The power of the memory is frequently connected with the degree of attention devoted to an object. If close attention is paid to a thing seen, a vivid impression is recorded on the brain, and the thing seen may be easily recalled. On the other hand, mere familiarity with a thing may not make a vivid impression of it on the memory. People sometimes forget the number of their house, they forget parts of their dress and even forget their own names. But if a man had the power of attention and it was not diverted in a direction that overwhelmed all concentration he should easily recollect.

"Then there is a loss of memory for certain words, as well as loss of power to express words, and this is a well recognized condition of brain trouble. Asphasia is a familiar name for these troubles. Then there is inability to write words or to recollect a particular word as associated with an idea.

"All that shows how complicated the memory is. In a case where a man forgot his own name or his past history, the physician would first look for an injury to the head, or in its absence for some organic trouble."

GEORGE F. SHRADY.